

Message Text

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53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 IO-12 DPW-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01 RSR-01 /132 W

----- 024278

R 100805 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1454

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMCONSUL NHAFRANG

TYO

VCQOUKBRMBASSY OTTAWA 1171

RUESBNRCDAMCONSUL TANGIER 60

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAIGON 8216

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT VS

SUBJECT: OPTIMISM OVER GVN ELECTION PROPOSAL

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM CAN THO 9 MAR 73 REPEATED FOR
YOUR ACTION AND INFO. QUOTE:

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAN THO 0399

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: OPTIMISM OVER GVN ELECTION PROPOSAL

1. SUMMARY: MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AND LEADING CITIZENS
IN THE CENTRAL DELTA WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT THE GVN'S INITIATIVE
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PROPOSING NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN AUGUST. THEY BELIEVE THE OTHER SIDE MUST ACCEDE. IF NOT, THEY SAY, WORLD OPINION WILL BRAND THE COMMUNISTS AS VIOLATORS OF THE JANUARY 27 AGREEMENT, AND FEARFUL OF TRUE POLITICAL COMPETITION WITH THE GVN. END SUMMARY.

2. CIVIL SERVANTS AND MILITARY OFFICIALS IN PHONG DINH AND CHUONG THIEN UNANIMOUSLY TOLD A CONSULATE GENERAL OFFICER THEY APPROVED OF FOREIGN MINISTER LAM'S APRIL 25 INITIATIVE. THE PHONG DINH PROVINCE CHIEF SAID IT SHOWS THE WORLD THE GVN RESPECTS THE JANUARY 27 AGREEMENT. COLONEL NGUYEN VINH LOC, 21 ST DIVISION CHIEF OF STAFF, AGREED, ADDING THAT AN ELECTION HELD WITHIN FOUR MONTHS WOULD YIELD A DECISIVE VICTORY FOR THE GVN, " EVEN WITH INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION. "

3. LESS PREDICTABLY, MANY SAID THEY BELIEVED THE OTHER SIDE WOULD ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL. THE PHONG DINH VIS CHIEF SAID THAT, AS LONG AS THE US AND THE RUSSIANS AND CHINESE REMAIN DETERMINED TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND THE PRG WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO COMPLY WITH ITS PROVISIONS. A CAN THO CITY OFFICIAL AGREED, ADDING THAT THE BASIS FOR LAM'S PROPOSAL IS, AFTER ALL, THE JANUARY AGREEMENT ITSELF. THE DIRECTOR FOR SHELL IN CAN THO SAID THE OTHER SIDE HAS " NO CHOICE" BUT TO ACCEPT THE GVN OFFER, THOUGH THEY WILL TRY TO STALL FOR TIME. THE PHONG DINH PROVINCE CHIEF SPECULATED THAT THE ENEMY WOULD TAKE PART IN THE PROPOSED ELECTIONS, BUT NOT UNTIL THE FIGHTING IN CAMBODIA IS SETTLED.

4. EVERYONE OF THOSE INTERVIEWED SAID THE OTHER SIDE HAD NOT YET REPLIED SPECIFICALLY TO THE GVN ELECTION INITIATIVE. SOME KNEW ABOUT THE COMMUNISTS' SIX- POINT COUNTER- PROPOSAL, AND SOME DID NOT.

5. COMMENT: IT IS CURIOUS THAT ALL OF THE VIETNAMESE QUERIED FELT THAT NATIONAL ELECTIONS WITH THE OTHER SIDE WILL SOON BE A REALITY-- IF NOT ON THE DAY PROPOSED THEN ONLY marginally later. EVEN AMONG THIS BATTLE- HARDENED SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION, WISHES SEEM TO BE FATHERING THOUGHTS. WISNER UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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NMAFVVZCZ

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